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June 11, 2008

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**DCH Commissioner Receives HIMSS Advocacy Award**  
***Dr. Rhonda Medows Honored for Health Information Technology Efforts***

**ATLANTA** – The Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) Dr. Rhonda Medows received the 2008 Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Advocacy State Leadership Award. The award recognizes state leaders for their significant contribution to the healthcare information field. Dr. Medows is noted for advocating health information technology to transform health care within Georgia.

“It’s an honor to be recognized by HIMSS for my efforts,” said Dr. Medows. “My commitment to transform health care with the use of health information technology is unwavering.”

Established in 2002, the HIMSS Advocacy award recognizes leaders who exemplify the mission of HIMSS through their advocacy efforts.

Since 2006, Dr. Medows has been advancing Governor Sonny Perdue’s Health Information Technology and Transparency Initiative (HITT) aimed at creating a statewide strategy to enable health information to be readily available and transparent. Recent HITT achievements under her leadership include:

- Establishment of a dedicated state Office of Health Information Technology
- Health Information Exchange (HIE) Matching Grants for Community Partnerships
- Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC) contract awarded to the state of Georgia as part of this 42 state collaborative
- Health Information Exchange Integration in the State Health Benefit Plan, Medicaid, and SCHIP programs
- Development of the Georgia Prescription Drug Data Exchange with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Georgia Department of Corrections health programs
- Development of a Medicaid ePrescribing program
- Creation of the Georgia Electronic Health Record (EHR) Community Partnership with physicians, health plans and larger employers to enhance the adoption of electronic health records
- Procurement of a Electronic Health Record System for Medicaid members
- Georgia selected as a pilot site for Medicare Physician Electronic Health Record Demonstration Project

In addition, she is also co-chair of the National Governors Association’s Health Information Communication and Data Exchange Taskforce today. The taskforce is charged with addressing the appropriate roles for publicly funded health programs in interoperable, electronic HIE.

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